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ACTION NEA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 12065: GDS 3-7-85 (TAYLOR, JAMES E.) CP-P
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PEPR, AF, US, UR
SUBJECT: (C) AMIN MAINTAINS DRA CONTINUES TO DESIRE "EXTENSIVE
FRIENDLY RELATIONS" WITH U.S. DESPITE AID CURTAILMENT

REF: KABUL 1686

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: IN AN INTERVIEW WITH AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST,
HAFIZUALLAH AMIN, VICE PREMIER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MAINTAINED THAT THE CURTAILMENT OF U.S. ECONOMIC AID WILL NOT
REDUCE HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE FOR "EXTENSIVE FRIENDLY RE-
LATIONS" WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. ACCORDING TO THE
JOURNALIST, AMIN SEEMED PUZZLED BY THE DECISION TO CUT ASSISTANCE,
AND SAID IT WAS "UNEXPECTED." END OF SUMMARY.

3. AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT SMITH HEMPSTONE INTERVIEWED HAFI-
ZULLAH AMIN ON MARCH 2. THE FULL TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW DID

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *MAC* DATE *7-13-81*RDS ☐ OF XDS ☐ EXT. DATETS AUTH. ☐ BRASSN(S)ENCLOSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐DECLASSIFIED ☐ SENSASABLE ☒RELEASE DENIED ☐

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NOT APPEAR IN THE AFGHAN PRESS, BUT QUESTIONS HEMPSTONE HAD
SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE WERE PUBLISHED. ONE EXCHANGE DEALING
WITH THE U.S. DECISION TO CURTAIL ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN
FOLLOWS: "QUESTION: IN THE WAKE OF AMBASSADOR DUFF'S MURDER,
THE U.S. GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY HAD DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE NO
NEW AMERICAN AID PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN. WHAT IS YOUR RES-
PONSE TO THIS SITUATION? WHAT MORE CAN YOU TELL ME AT THIS
TIME ABOUT THE IDENTITY AND MOTIVES OF MR. DUFF'S MURDERERS?
ANSWER: IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABDUCTION OF AMBASSADOR DUFF,
OUR POSITION, AND ACTIONS, FULL OF GOODWILL, IS CLEAR TO ALL
AND THERE ARE NO GROUNDS FOR SUSPICION. WE HAVE ALREADY
GIVEN ADEQUATE AND SUBSTANTIAL INFORMATION IN THIS RESPECT

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NOT APPEAR IN THE AFGHAN PRESS, BUT QUESTIONS HEMPSTONE HAD SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE WERE PUBLISHED. ONE EXCHANGE DEALING WITH THE U.S. DECISION TO CURTAIL ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN FOLLOWS: "QUESTION: IN THE WAKE OF AMBASSADOR DURS' MURDER, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY HAD DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE NO NEW AMERICAN AID PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN. WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS SITUATION? WHAT MORE CAN YOU TELL ME AT THIS TIME ABOUT THE IDENTITY AND MOTIVES OF MR. DURS' MURDERERS? ANSWER: IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABDUCTION OF AMBASSADOR DURS, OUR POSITION, AND ACTIONS, FULL OF GOODWILL, IS CLEAR TO ALL AND THERE ARE NO GROUNDS FOR SUSPICION. WE HAVE ALREADY GIVEN ADEQUATE AND SUBSTANTIAL INFORMATION IN THIS RESPECT AND HAVE STATED THAT THE DECISION OF THE UNITED STATES RESTS WITH THEM. HOWEVER, OUR PROFOUND INTEREST CONTINUES TO BE THAT OF DEVELOPING FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF AFGHANISTAN AND THE UNITED STATES AND SUCH DECISIONS SHALL IN NO MANNER WEAKEN THAT INTEREST." LATER IN THE INTERVIEW, AMIN AGAIN ASSERTED THAT THE DRA DESIRES "DEEP AND EXTENSIVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS" WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

4. HEMPSTONE CLAIMED THAT AMIN SEEMED PUZZLED BY THE U.S. DECISION TO CUT AID, AND SAID IT WAS "UNEXPECTED." AMIN REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT THE DRA STILL EXPECTS MATERIAL HELP FROM THE U.S. IN THE FUTURE. WHEN HEMPSTONE MENTIONED THAT THE AFGHAN MEDIA APPEARS TO MAKE THE U.S. THE TARGET OF ANTI-IMPERIALIST, ANTI-CAPITALIST REMARKS, AMIN REPLIED THAT THE NAME OF THE UNITED STATES IS NEVER MENTIONED IN THE MEDIA IN THIS CONTEXT. TO HEMPSTONE'S ASSERTION THAT MANY CONGRESSMEN ARE OUTRAGED OVER THE AFGHAN HANDLING OF THE DURS MURDER, THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASSERTED THAT THE POLICIES AND ATTITUDES OF THE DRA ARE "NOT INTERPRETED IN THE CORRECT WAY" IN THE U.S.

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6. IN THE PUBLISHED TEXT, AMIN ADDRESSED SEVERAL POTENTIALLY PRICKLY ISSUES DEALING WITH DOMESTIC MATTERS: HE ORBLOUQUELY CONCEDED THAT A DROUGHT WAS IN THE OFFING AND THAT THE SOVIETS, AS WELL AS OTHERS, HAVE BEEN CONTACTED FOR HELP; HE DENIED THAT THE EXILED PARACHAMIST LEADERS ARE BEING "HELD IN STORAGE IN EASTERN EUROPE IN THE EVENT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FALL" (HEMPSTONE'S QUESTION); HE REITERATED THAT 98 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE SUPPORT THE REGIME AND ASSERTED THAT WITHOUT FOREIGN "INTERFERENCE" THE REGIME WOULD ENCOUNTER "NO PROBLEMS" OF OPPOSITION; AND, HE REPEATED THAT THE REGIME HAS "UNDENIABLE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE" THAT FOREIGN SOURCES HAVE INTRIGUED AGAINST THE REGIME.

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6. IN THE PUBLISHED TEXT, AMIN ADDRESSED SEVERAL POTENTIALLY PRICKLY ISSUES DEALING WITH DOMESTIC MATTERS: HE OBLIQUELY CONCEDED THAT A DROUGHT WAS IN THE OFFING AND THAT THE SOVIETS, AS WELL AS OTHERS, HAVE BEEN CONTACTED FOR HELP: HE DENIED THAT THE EXILED PARCHAMIST LEADERS ARE BEING "HELD IN STORAGE IN EASTERN EUROPE IN THE EVENT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD FALL" (CHEMPSTONE'S QUESTION); HE REITERATED THAT 98 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE SUPPORT THE REGIME AND ASSERTED THAT WITHOUT FOREIGN "INTERFERENCE" THE REGIME WOULD ENCOUNTER "NO PROBLEMS" OF OPPOSITION; AND, HE REPEATED THAT THE REGIME HAS "UNDENIABLE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE" THAT FOREIGN SOURCES HAVE INTRIGUED AGAINST THE REGIME, BUT HE AGAIN DECLINED TO NAME THESE COUNTRIES AT THIS TIME.

7. ON THE FOREIGN POLICY FRONT, AMIN REVEALED A DISAGREEMENT WITH KIPLING'S "GREAT GAME" THESIS, AND CLAIMED THAT PREVIOUS AFGHAN REGIMES HAD A "REACTIONARY NATURE" AND WERE "RELATED TO IMPERIALISM". THE DRA, HE ADDED, IS TRULY NON-ALIGNED AND INDEPENDENT, BUT "MAINTAINS DEEP FRIENDSHIP" WITH ITS GREAT NORTHERN NEIGHBOR. AMIN DISCLAIMED ANY DESIRE TO JOIN THE WARSAW PACT OF ANY OTHER MILITARY BLOC, BUT TO A QUERY REGARDING POSSIBLE MEMBERSHIP IN COMECON,

HE REPLIED THAT THE GOVERNMENT "SHALL JOIN ANY ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTEREST OF OUR TOILING PEOPLE".

8. COMMENT: AMIN'S INTERVIEW CONTAINS THE FIRST PUBLIC OFFICIAL REACTION BY THE DRA TO THE U.S. DECISION TO CURTAIL ASSISTANCE. IT WAS THIS STATEMENT THAT DEFGOVMIN MOST REFERRED TO IN HIS MEETING WITH THE CHARGE ON MARCH 4 (REFTEL). AMIN'S STATEMENTS APPEAR CALCULATED TO PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON THE U.S. FOR THE DOWNTURN IN AFGHAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HIS REMARKS REGARDING DOMESTIC AFFAIRS ARE INTERESTING MOSTLY FOR THE FACT THAT PROBLEMS SUCH AS AN IMMINENT DROUGHT, ACTIVE DOMESTIC OPPOSITION, AND (PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY) THE ISSUE OF THE REGIME'S SECURITY WERE PERMITTED TO APPEAR IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.

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CONCEIVABLY, PUBLIC REVELATION OF SOME OF THESE VARIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AILMENTS AT THIS TIME, MAY HAVE BEEN AIMED AT A MOSCOW AUDIENCE WHO, IN AMIN'S VIEW, MAY NEED FURTHER CONCINCING THAT KABUL'S PROBLEMS ARE REAL AND THEIR SOLUTION NEEDS TANGIBLE AND PERHAPS INCREASED SOVIET HELP.
AMSTUTZ